

University at Buffalo

Principles, Policy, and Procedures

For Setting Fees, Fines, Deposits, and Service Charges

Introduction

This document provides a description of the three categories of fees, general principles applicable to campus fees, steps to establish or modify existing fees, and timetable for fee approvals.

This document covers all fees, fines, deposits, and service charges deposited in an Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) account, or an agency account maintained by the University at Buffalo Foundation (UBF), Research Foundation (RF), or Faculty Student Association (FSA).

This campus policy is based on SUNY System Administration policy. The complete SUNY Administrative Policy regarding fees, rentals, and other charges can be found at http://www.suny.info/policies/groups/public/documents/policies/pub_suny_pp_039046.htm

Fee Categories

1. SUNY Board of Trustees Authorized Fees and Charges

- The SUNY Board of Trustees approves university-wide fees that are required to be paid by students as a condition of attendance. The Board's fee authorization may take the form of imposing a fee, with or without a ceiling level, requiring either a university-wide charge to be established or individual campus rates to be approved by the Chancellor or designee. These fees are normally proposed during the University's budget development process and are implemented as required by law or the Board's policy. These include broad-based fees charged to all enrolled students, such as Intercollegiate Athletics Fee, Health Services Fee, Technology Fee, and College Fee. Other Board of Trustee authorized fees include the student activities fee; health insurance fee for international exchange, research, and study programs; and admission deposits.

2. Fees Authorized by the SUNY Chancellor or Designee

The Chancellor (or designee) is authorized to establish a schedule of reasonable fines, fees, deposits, and charges in accordance with guidelines to be issued by the Trustees. These fees include:

- Academic Course-Related Fees are appropriately charged for academic offerings that entail extraordinary costs, result in a tangible end product for the student (e.g. sculpture, ceramics, and photography), or where a special service is provided (e.g. music instrument rental).

- User Fees, Charges, and Fines for Violation of Institutional Regulations finance discrete activities and services available to those who pay the fee. Fees in this category may include but are not limited to: late registration and late payment fee, library fees and fines, drop/add fee, returned check charge, placement fees, residence hall common area damage repair fees, and the administratively cancelled registration fee.

3. Campus Authorized Fees

The campus is authorized to establish certain charges and fees. These fees and charges may be funded through an IFR account or a non-State agency (e.g., Faculty Student Association) where the service for which the charge is made is provided by such agency. Examples of campus-authorized fees include residence hall room rents, meal plan charges, non-credit-bearing instructional program fees, equipment deposits and breakage charges, event entrance and attendance fees, and charges for services and facility usage.

Campus Process for Establishing or Modifying Fees

The campus process for establishing or modifying fees, including required approvals and deadlines, varies depending on the type of fee. In 1998, the University established a Comprehensive Fee to consolidate several campus-required student fees. Because of the widespread impact on students, a separate approval process is required for the Comprehensive Fee, residence hall and meal plan charges. The fee approval process for the various types of campus fees is detailed in the following sections of this policy:

Comprehensive Fee, Residence Hall and Meal Plan Charges	Attachment A
Campus Fees Requiring Approval by SUNY System Administration, Other than the Comprehensive Fee, Residence Hall and Meal Plan Charges	Attachment B
Campus Fees which do not Require Approval by SUNY System Administration	Attachment C

Questions regarding this policy document should be directed to Financial Services at 645-2640.



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Provost



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ATTACHMENT A

University at Buffalo Procedure for Changes to the Comprehensive Fee, Residence Hall and Meal Plan Charges

The following procedures are designed to ensure that required approvals from SUNY System Administration are obtained for changes to the various components of the University's Comprehensive Fee, and for charges to students for residence halls and meal plans.

Scope

The specific fees covered by this section of the policy include:

- Comprehensive Fee Components:
 - Campus Life Fee
 - College Fee *
 - Intercollegiate Athletics Fee
 - Student Health Services Fee
 - Technology Fee
 - Transcript Fee
 - Transportation Fee
- Residence Hall Room Rentals and Related Charges and Deposits
- Meal Plan Charges

Procedures

1. Changes to the Comprehensive Fee are initiated by the Provost, Vice President for University Services, and Vice President for Student Affairs, as part of the University's budget process. Annual, total broad-based fee increases are to be no greater than the **Higher Education Price Index (HEPI)** unless a campus' total broad-based fees are significantly below the current system-wide average of broad-based fees or there is a compelling case for a greater increase. Changes are implemented annually for the Fall semester. Requests should be directed to the Provost by February 15th to ensure sufficient time for review before the submission deadline in step #6 below.
2. Changes to residence hall and meal plan charges are communicated by the Vice President for Student Affairs, to the Provost, as part of the annual budget process for the Dormitory Income Fund Reimbursable (DIFR) budget and the FSA budget respectively. Changes are implemented annually for the fall semester. Requests should be directed to the Provost by February 15th to ensure sufficient review before the submission deadline in step #6 below.
3. The General Principles for Establishing Campus Fees, detailed in Attachment D of this policy, should be considered in developing the support for proposed fee changes.
4. The Provost, Vice President for University Services, and the Vice President for Student Affairs will review the proposed changes with the President. The President will make the final decision.

* The amount of the College Fee is set by SUNY and therefore is not negotiable.

5. A consultation process, as outlined by the Vice President for Student Affairs, with student leadership and student input is required for any proposed changes to the Comprehensive Fee, and residence hall and meal plan charges. In addition, there will be a yearly review of proposed changes with the Faculty Senate Budget Priorities Committee.
6. The Vice President for University Services forwards the request for changes to the Comprehensive Fee to SUNY System Administration for final approval. Changes to residence hall and meal plan charges are submitted to SUNY System Administration as part of the annual budget process for the DIFR budget and FSA budget respectively. The Chancellor (or designee) determines if approval by the SUNY Board of Trustees is required for any of the requested changes. The target date for submission of this information is March 15th.
7. The Vice President for University Services notifies the administrative units affected by the fee request, after approval or rejection is received from SUNY System Administration.

ATTACHMENT B

University at Buffalo Procedure for New or Changes to Campus Fees Requiring Approval by SUNY System Administration, Other than the Comprehensive Fee, Residence Hall and Meal Plan Charges

The following procedures are designed to ensure that required approvals from SUNY System Administration are obtained for new campus fees or changes to existing campus fees. This section of the policy covers fees that are set by the campus and which require SUNY approval, other than the University's Comprehensive Fee and residence hall and meal plan charges. The requirements in this policy section apply regardless of the University fiscal entity to which the fees are deposited.

Scope

The specific fees covered by this section of the policy include:

- Academic Course-Related Fees
- Administratively Cancelled Registration Fee
- Admission Deposits and Application Fees
- Drop/add Fee
- Health Insurance Fee for International Exchange, Research, and Study Programs
- Late Registration and Late Payment Fee
- Library Fees and Fines
- Orientation Program Charges
- Parking and Traffic Fines*
- Placement Fees
- Residence Hall Common Area Damage Repair Fees
- Returned Check Charge
- Student Activity Fee**

Procedures

1. Fees covered by this policy section are requested by the administrative or academic area responsible for the fee. The Request for Fee Approval must be approved by the appropriate individual(s), as determined by the guidelines within the administrative/academic area. The General Principles for Establishing Campus Fees, detailed in Attachment D of this policy, should be considered in developing the support for the proposed fee or change. The financial administrator of the administrative/academic area completes a Request for Fee Approval form, available on the UBBusiness web site at <http://www.business.buffalo.edu/ubbContent/Forms/fs/Request for Fee Approval Form.xls>
2. Fee requests initiated by units reporting to the Provost must first be forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Budget, while all other requests must be initially submitted to Financial Services. Requests for the following Fall semester must be received by Financial Services by February 15th to ensure sufficient time for review before the submission deadline in step #4 below.

3. The Vice President for University Services will review the proposed fees with the President, Provost, and Vice President for Student Affairs. The President will make the final decision.
4. The Vice President for University Services forwards the fee request to SUNY System Administration for final approval. The Chancellor (or designee) determines if approval by the SUNY Board of Trustees is required. The target date for submission of this request is March 15th. (Requests for Orientation Program Fee changes should be made by December 1st to ensure that approval from SUNY System Administration is received in advance of the planning process for the summer program.)
5. The Vice President for University Services notifies the administrative and academic units affected by the fee request, after approval or rejection is received from SUNY System Administration.

* Changes to Parking and Traffic Fines are subject to UB Council Resolution.

** Every four years, the students determined by referendum whether student activity programs shall be supported by either a voluntary or mandatory Student Activity Fee. UB students have determined to make the payment mandatory and the fee is collected upon registration. The fee must not exceed an amount to be determined by the Chancellor in consultation with the student assembly. An amendment to the Mandatory Student Activity Fee Policy, dated June 25, 2002, states that the referendum will occur prior to the close of the 2003/04 academic year and every two years thereafter. The policy was further updated effective September 28, 2004, indicating that referendum shall occur prior to the close of the 2004-2005 academic year and every two years thereafter.

ATTACHMENT C

University at Buffalo Procedure for New or Changes to Campus Fees which do not Require Approval by SUNY System Administration

The following procedures are designed to ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained and accurate records are maintained for all fees assessed on campus as required by SUNY System Administration policy. This section of the policy covers fees that are set by the campus which do not require direct SUNY System Administration approval. The requirements in this policy section apply regardless of the University fiscal entity to which the fees are deposited.

Scope

The specific fees covered by this section of the policy include, but are not limited to:

- Non-credit-bearing Instructional Program Fees
- Patient/Client-Care Charges
- Equipment Deposits and Breakage Charges
- Identification Card Replacement Charges
- Diploma Cover Charge
- Voluntary Fees for Selected Student Health Services
- Service Charges to Students, Faculty and Staff for access to Campus Services or Facilities (e.g. locker rentals, printing and copying services, equipment rentals)
- Charges for Campus Services or Facilities Provided to Sponsoring Agencies for Grants, Contracts, and other Sponsored Activities
- Internal Campus Charges for Services Provided by One Campus Unit to Another Campus Unit (e.g. photo-copying, research lab fees, chemical and radioactive waste disposal, room rentals, publications, research chemicals)

Procedures

1. Fees covered by this policy section are requested by the administrative or academic area responsible for the fee. The Request for Fee Approval must be approved by the appropriate individual(s), as determined by the guidelines within the administrative/academic area. The General Principles for Establishing Campus Fees, detailed in Attachment D of this policy, should be considered in developing the support for the proposed fee or change. The financial administrator of the administrative/academic area completes a Request for Fee Approval form, available on the UBBusiness web site at <http://www.business.buffalo.edu/ubbContent/Forms/fs/Request for Fee Approval Form.xls>
2. Service charges to students, faculty, and staff; sponsored agencies; and campus units are governed by the requirements in the University's Service Center Policy. This policy can be found on the UBBusiness web site at <http://www.business.buffalo.edu/ubbcontent/Policies/fs/policy.pdf>. Financial administrators must complete and attach the Rate Calculation Worksheet which is available as part of the policy.

3. Fee requests initiated by units reporting to the Provost must first be forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Budget, while all other requests must be initially submitted to Financial Services. All requests must be received by Financial Services before May 15th. Fees charged to students will be implemented for the following Fall semester.
4. Financial Services reviews the justification for the fee, cost components, and relevant SUNY and campus policy. The request, and Financial Services' recommendation, is then forwarded to the Controller for final determination.
5. Depending on the nature of the fee, the Controller will review proposed changes to fees with the Vice President for University Services; the Vice President for University Services may review these changes with the President, Provost, and Vice President for Student Affairs.
6. Financial Services notifies the financial administrator of the requesting unit, and other appropriate offices, of the fee approval or rejection.

ATTACHMENT D

University at Buffalo General Principles for Establishing Campus Fees

The following general principles govern the establishment of new fees or changes to existing fees on campus. These principles apply regardless of the University fiscal entity to which the fees are deposited.

- Fees should recover costs when no other dedicated funds are available for that purpose.
- Fees should be set based on the full cost of the activity/service for which the fee is levied, including fringe benefit and General University Service Fee (GUSF) costs.
- Income from fees should be used to support the service being provided by the fee income.
- A consultation process with impacted customers is encouraged where appropriate.
- If waivers are permitted, a fee waiver policy must exist and be included as part of the fee proposal or request for a fee change. Documentation supporting waivers must be maintained for audit purposes.